

Rep. _____ lauds effort to extend prenatal care

Washington—Rep. _____ expressed strong support today for a government plan to extend prenatal care under the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP). The Department of Health and Human Services is proposing to revise regulations to include unborn children in the program.

"This is what President Bush meant by compassionate conservatism," said Rep. _____. "Every child deserves the best possible chance at living a healthy life. Any doctor will tell you how important prenatal care is, and how hard it is for poor mothers to get it. By extending the SCHIP program to the unborn children of needy mothers we are reaching out to the most vulnerable people in America.

"This also makes monetary sense," Rep. _____ said. "Prenatal care is all about prevention. If we invest a little money now in prevention, we will save a lot later combating illnesses that could have been avoided."

According to the regulation published in the Federal Register today, the proposed rule "would revise the definition of 'child' under the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) to clarify that an unborn child may be considered a 'targeted low-income child' by the State and therefore eligible for SCHIP if other applicable State eligibility requirements are met. Under this definition, the State may elect to extend eligibility to unborn children for health benefits coverage, including prenatal care and delivery, consistent with SCHIP requirements."

#

Posted: March 5, 2002
Author: Pitts/Neville